

## ADULT EDUCATION IN IDAHO

Adult education programs provide a range of instructional services that address the basic educational needs of Idaho adults and their families. These services are funded under Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Title II of WIA is the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998 (AEFLA), which is the state-administered federal grant for adult education. Adult education programs offer opportunities for adults to improve their literacy skills in order to meet their goals and responsibilities as parents, citizens, and workers.

- **Definition of Adult Literacy**

An individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

*Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*

[The ability to use] printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

*The 1992 and 2003 National Assessments of Adult Literacy*

- **What is AEFLA?**

AEFLA is the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998. This is federal legislation that provides funding to U.S. states (and the District of Columbia and U.S. territories) to provide basic educational programs to adults. Each state must submit a State Plan for Adult Education to the U.S. Dept. of Education that explains how it will carry out the provisions and requirements of AEFLA. One of these requirements is to distribute multi-year grants to local programs on a competitive basis. Programs that wish to receive AEFLA grants must submit proposals that explain how they will carry out the goals, policies, and requirements that the State has established. For information on the AEFLA grant process in Idaho, see information under "Documents" on our homepage. Although there is no competition for AEFLA funding for Fiscal Year 2006, the RFP page provides an overview of the general requirements for funding, details on post-funding requirements, and links to additional information about providing AEFLA services. Currently funded agencies in good standing with the Idaho State Department of Education/ Office of Adult Basic Education are eligible to submit reapplication for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Section 231 and EL Civics.

- What are Idaho's goals in supporting adult education and family literacy programs funded under AEFLA?
  - To improve the quality of existing services through the development and implementation of program improvement strategies and services
  - To serve Idaho's workforce by developing and expanding partnerships between adult education providers and regional Workforce One-Stop Centers
  - To support adult education and family literacy programs through state leadership activities that:
    - inform instructional practice to increase student achievement
    - provide technical assistance and professional development for program improvement
    - provide data, statistics, and research that informs educators, employers, policy makers, legislators, funders, and the public about the need for and benefits of adult education and family literacy in Idaho
    - improve and expand support services to enhance the provider network infrastructure
  - To fully integrate and coordinate with other state and federal programs in order to maximize the benefits of adult education and family literacy to Idaho families, schools, and workforce.
- What services are provided by AEFLA programs?  
Local programs may provide any or all of the following services:

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English Literacy and Civics Education (EL/Civics)

Family Literacy

- **Who is eligible to participate in Adult Education and Family Literacy programs?**

Anyone who is 16 years of age or older, who is not enrolled in secondary school or taking any classes in secondary school, and who has needs below the level of high school completion -- as evidenced by a TABE Assessment-- is eligible to participate in any Adult & Family Literacy educational activity. This includes students who may already have attained a high school diploma or GED/HS Equivalency Certificate and who have skills below the twelfth grade level. They should be reported through the Idaho Management and Accountability System (IMAS) if they meet these criteria, are not being charged to participate, and are enrolled in any "Eligible activities," which include reading, writing, and or math at adult basic education level/s below high school completion and speaking, listening, reading and/or writing in English as a Second Language below level/s of high school completion. The determining factor for participation in the ABE program is not whether a person has a GED certificate or high school diploma but rather "Having educational needs below the level considered equivalent to high school completion."

- **Target Population**

The population targeted for adult literacy services through the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act in Idaho are those who:

- Are age 16 or older AND
- Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school AND
- Lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society; OR do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; OR are unable to speak, read, or write the English language

- **What does it cost to enroll in an adult education program?**

AEFLA funded Adult Basic Education programs in Idaho charge no enrollment or participation fee. However, policies, rates, and fee structures vary among those programs that charge for books/materials. Some programs offer waivers, scholarships, or other arrangements to students in need. Contact individual programs for specific policy information.

- **Teachers**

Qualifications and requirements for paid instructional staff vary by program. Although there are no state mandated requirements such as certification or licensure for adult education teachers, the federal

legislation requires that AEFLA programs be staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators. In addition, some programs are required to comply with their host institution's requirements for instructional staff. Adult Basic Education teachers are required to attend yearly and ongoing state training in specific areas.

There is no central clearinghouse of position openings in adult education.